

6/13/77

KTEIC





13 June 77 Received a letter from George Barr, along with a lot of good quotes. He starts out by saying he felt guilty for not writing, etc etc. BUT YOU PEOPLE LISTEN, PLEASE! I don't want to make anyone feel guilty! My attempts to trim the mailing list are just an effort to cut down expenses, and not to bother anyone who doesn't want it with Kteic Magazine. None of you are under an obligation to write. Please believe that. Just now and again, though, I'd like verbal or written proof that (1) you still want to get KM; (2) you are getting KM. That's all. Now on with George's letter.

Thanks for sending the photos of Sharman. I'll try to have the picture finished in time to exhibit at the World Fantasy Con in LA this coming October. The photos of course are beautiful... beautiful subject: (almost-) automatically beautiful photos. If I were to pick a fault at all, it would be that they are obviously publicity photos. And the only thing wrong with that is that it bothers me occasionally knowing that people will have the picture I used as reference material to compare with the finished painting. I make so many changes for character or composition, that I'm always afraid people will point out every minute way in which the painting differs from the original photo and assume that it was because I couldn't do any better. (Insecurity is a heavy load to carry.)

Re a paragraph in KTEIC: Pigs don't sweat. That's why you've never seen one do it. They can't. They don't even have sweat glands. That's why they roll in the mud - not because they're essentially dirty animals, but because it's the only way they have to cool off. A dog's sweat glands are all on his tongue. (Ptheh!) which is why they pant and we don't. (We breath hard when exhausted or excited, but it's not the same thing.) Aren't I a wealth of useless information.

As of approximately the 21st of June my address will change from 880 to 904 - all else the same. We're moving next door. Jim's father suggested that since we obviously get along as well as we do, we ought to invest in a house together and stop pouring rent into someone else's pocket. Co-incidentally, the house next door came up for sale a few days

later, and we took it. It'll be the easiest move I've ever made, and hopefully the last one for a good long while. Jim has purchased a bed for his new and larger room which should appeal to your sybaritic side. It's a king-size water bed, massive wood, four poster, with a solid wood canopy. So high off the floor it needs a step stool to get into it. And he has the most decadent headspread you've ever seen, made of Alpaca fur and rough-edged sheepskins. His room will look very like

something out of Hearst castle by the time he gets through with it... wood paneling, and heavy beamed ceiling. My bedroom is always so crowded I can't think of it in terms of decor. As long as there's a path to the bed, and no crumbs on the sheets, I feel at home.

Your request for quotes appealed to my innate hope of immortality. But I found it very difficult to get down to actually quoting myself.

Finally - realizing that I really don't possess an awful lot in the way of wit, I gave up on that end of it. When I was living with the Trimble's, and occasionally said something that I thought at the time was witty, Bjo usually accused me of being bitchy or catty, (could never make up her mind between canine and feline.) And I admit to a certain talent for concise character assassination - but that's hardly what I'd like to be remembered for.

So, I went back through a batch of recent correspondence, and a couple of published interviews, and picked out some things that... while I can hardly claim that they embody any timeless wisdom... they're things that I think give the greatest possible insight into me as a person, and are the sort of thing I'd hope I might be remembered for having said.

On the whole, fandom resists change with a tenacity somewhat reminiscent of your average coelocanth.

The average male fan can be distinguished in the wild by plumage approximately ten years out of date.

Isn't it odd the number of people who read and write with total familiarity of planet-spanning jumps, intergalactic travel, magnetic elevator tubes, anti-gravity belts, etc., etc., who cannot be dragged onto an airplane to take a ride that the mundane, pedantic, mired-in-today individual accepts as a part of everyday life?

Anyone or anything that has been in fandom one day longer than a newcomer automatically seems eternal.

The insistence that a particular job should be done for idealistic reasons usually comes from people safe in the knowledge that they'll never be in the position to find out how far their own ideals will stretch.

(on cartooning) I think one must somewhat approach a skill really to appreciate how difficult it is.

Kirk can be more successfully imitated than Rotsler because with Rotsler's style, there's nowhere to hide a bad drawing; it's all right out there to be seen.

I wonder if everyone ages with this same feeling of astonishment.

I often feel like a tool in someone else's hand - merely an attachment to the pencil which enables them to draw a picture utilizing my ability.

Most of the people I've met who - secure on the side of "fine" art - can readily distinguish the difference between "fine" and "commercial," are people who seldom if ever sell. That keeps them safe from the accusation of being "commercial."

If a person's life is full and worthwhile, he doesn't need the kind of art which requires the equivalent of a college course to comprehend. And not needing it doesn't make him any less than the critic who has made understanding such art his life's work.

WR: I am firmly convinced that most people don't know a thing about art or creativity. They know the symptoms but not the cause. That old "fight" between "fine" & "commercial" art is one made by the ignorant. Look at some "commercial art"--the Sistine ceiling, almost everything by Michaelangelo, most of da Vinci; almost every one of the Old Masters had "patrons" who wanted portraits for their own glory or to "decorate" churches they had built (again, to their glory). Rembrandt had a hellava time doing anything but commissioned portraits (read commercial) and especially after they didn't like "The Night Watch." Then he was really in trouble. Van Gogh is one of the few that you couldn't say was "commercial" in some way--but he tried to be!

Ran into a friend the other day the live-in girl friend of what might be described as my lawyer, if I had need for one. (There really has to be some word to designate someone like that--Sharman & Charlotte, etc--who is not just a friend, not a wife, not a "mistress", etc. Anyone think of something. Same goes for the other half of that, too--what is the man: "the boy friend?") Anyway, she was telling me she's been giving houseroom to a photographer named Lee Lawrence who is a fine arts photographer. (He really is good!) But he will not do anything "commercial" to soil his reputation. As a result he's been living off her & Jake, my lawyer, for almost 3 years. Confronted with a telephone bill of \$10 and asked for comment (meaning money) he said it was trivia and he wasn't going to have anything to do with it. To him, yes, it's trivial, but to Bobbie, she has to work to pay it. I don't like that.

(Bobbie & I also found a mutual dislike of Dorothy--she had joined the growing throng of Unbelievers, gang. And she lives two doors away.)

The insecure artist is, among artists, pretty much the average.

There are professional illustrators I can't stand; whose every published piece kind of offends my sense of the rightness of things that it got published at all. I look at what they do and conclude that:
A - they work cheap, and/or B - they've got the goods on the publisher.

Actually, George, that probably speaks more for the taste--or lack of it--of art directors & publishers.

If you are satisfied with anything you've done, it's likely because you don't know any better. And if, after the passage of a year or so, you are still pleased with it, you've probably not learned a heck of a lot since then.

If you ever paint a picture without learning something in the process - ~~even~~ if it's just that you're not capable of all you thought you were - you've wasted your time.... (unless you got an awful lot of money for it.)

I find the idea of "in-born" abilities ridiculous. It belittles the years that you spend learning and developing. It reduces all of your efforts to the level of "luck."

Here I disagree with you, George. Research seems to have proved that we inherit "clusters" of abilities or talents. Mechanical skills, manual skills, certain kinds of musical talents, etc. A example: a musician is often able to pick up another instrument and quickly learn, or to write music, etc. Or a mechanic can quickly expand his abilities, or to learn a whole different set of mechanical abilities quicker than, say, the musician.

I do think we have "in-born" abilities...or tendencies...probably medically, too, such as a family history of heart disease, etc. You inherit a tendency toward certain clusters of skills & talents. Probably those people who are rootless, losers, etc. are people who did not develop those "natural" tendencies, but were forced into other streams. Maybe sexually, too.

But the years of learning and developing, etc that you mention are the efforts to develop specific skills or talents within that inherited cluster. I don't think the two things--"in-born" abilities and learning--are incompatible.

(on Tim Kirk) He is a case-book study of chronic self-effacement; he can make mere modesty look like outright bragging.

(on Tim Kirk) I've seen him remain friendly in the face of treatment that would have sent me shrieking up a wall, or cowering under the kitchen sink.

(on children's books) The only reason kids draw the way they do is because they can't draw any better. That's not the kind of pictures they like to look at.

"He's so commercial" is the ultimate put-down for a "fine" artist. And "He approaches fine-art in the quality of his work" seems the highest compliment that can be paid to a commercial illustrator. I've actually heard people say: "Oh that doesn't look like a book cover; that's more like a painting!" And they think they're bestowing high praise.

Much of what is called "self-expression" is merely self-indulgence.

I thought it was time for a drawing in here. George's next quote was "Being retarded might excuse poor workmanship; being ethnic doesn't."

Hear-hear! Most especially black art. I have seen so little that had any technical skill and, frankly, much art. (Indian, too; we noticed that last summer on our tour through the Southwest--so little was any good!) Are people afraid to criticize because the art comes from a ethnic background? Bad art is bad art; good art is good art, regardless of the source.

Somewhere else in the letter George says, "One piece of advice to young artists: don't mistake an intricate rendering for a piece of good drawing."

Hear-hear-hear! For decades I have been downgrading Virgil Finlay. It gets to me when people talk about how many lines (or bubbles) he puts into his drawings, as if the line-per-square-inch count was somehow an indication of value. (Same goes for people who are impressed only or chiefly by what a work of art costs.) I suppose it is because so

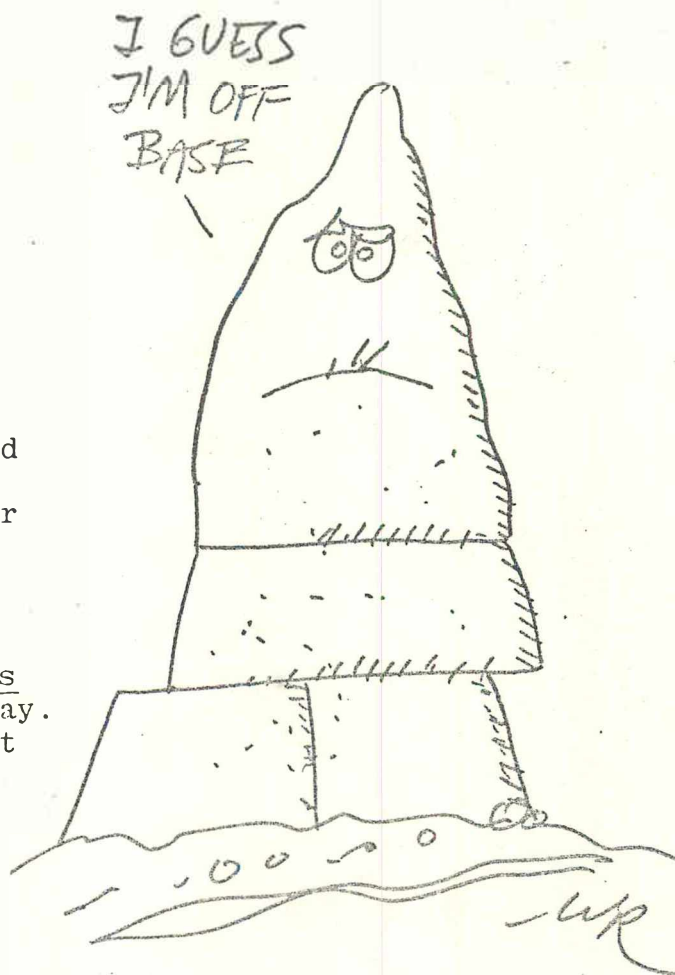
few have any faith in their own taste, so they need some kind of yardstick to go by. Money is one and the amount of work put into a painting or whatever is another. As I said in Patron of the Arts (plug) "Time has nothing to do with the value of the work." Only to the artist; if it takes him five years to do a sculpture or painting then he is not going to do very many. But to the person looking at (or buying) the art, time shouldn't have a thing to do with it; whether it takes X five minutes or five years has nothing to do with the worth of the art. Except to the ignorant, I suppose. Who cares how long it took an author to write a book, a sculptor to carved away the inessential, a painting to cover a certain square metric yard of canvas? Does it matter? (End of tirade.)

I have a "thing" about cuddly little furry things, and I try to paint them in such a way that one would want to pet or fondle them. I guess I paint people the same way.

The word "mature" has a dreadfully final sound to it. It implies completion, or completeness, with nothing left to achieve. A mature vegetable has nothing left to do but rot.

I've never heard her con-verse at all; just verse.

Maturity is like happiness: it is not a goal, but a road. It is not something which one achieves, so much as it is a method for achieving.

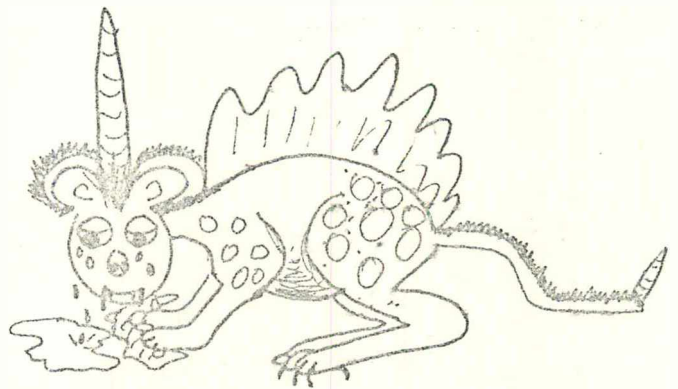


(a lengthy bit from a letter which was never published, but which I liked:)

While hunting through volumes on costume and fashion in local book-stores in a vain search for details on Samurai arms and armour, I verified a fact I've long suspected: Egypt and Mesopotamia, (where, of course, life began,) existed only until the Golden Age of Greece, then passed from the pages of history, (making a brief re-appearance at the time of Julius Caesar,) that is, or else people there just ceased wearing clothing - which is pretty much the same thing. Persia and India existed only insofar as they influenced Greece - mostly because of Alexander. China, Japan: the Orient, not only never existed, but still don't... though in Victorian times in England their existence was suspected. With the rise of civilization in Northern Europe, the Mediterranean countries passed out of existence; and Europe itself only lasted until the reign of Queen Elizabeth the first. Then, the people of England, too, stopped wearing clothing co-incidentally with the formation of the United States of America - the only country in the Western hemisphere which managed to raise itself above the level of savagry. Now, only America exists, and has for several hundred years... lonely, but clothed!

Yes, yes--noticed the same thing myself. Whoever puts costume books together just is blind to certain periods. Or, like you say, they all went naked. # The Sharman drawing on the right is titled, "A horrible monstrosity crying to show that he's not such a bad guy after all, and linking mankind and horrible monstrosities in bondage."

Meanwhile, back with Geo:



Frazetta seems to feel he's painting the way everyone would if they had the courage or the intelligence... so why does he put down his imitators? At least they're trying!

I don't think I'm conceited, but I have to believe in myself to a certain extent; everyone does... or there'd be no reason to go on working.

(on being introduced to people) They'd say with raised eyebrows: "So you're George Barr. I've heard of you." And I wanted to die. I'd heard some of the same things.

I've made my living from my artwork for longer than a lot of fans have been in fandom... and I'm still thought to be a fan (read AMATEUR) who has lucked into a few sales... and worst of all, that's how I feel.

Style is you, doing whatever you do, in the manner that is most comfortable for you. It happens, whether you want it to or not.

It still bothers me very much when people say nothing at all about the subject of one of my pictures, but go on endlessly about how it was done WITH A BALL POINT PEN! All they're noticing is the gravy, and ignoring the fact that it's occasionally a pretty good piece of meat underneath.

Of course, I suppose discussing the medium is legitimate after you have sucked up everything else in the work of art. My old friend Gene Coe--we went to art school together & he's now teaching cinema at USC--said someone once said to him, "I see you paint a lot of subject matter."

The word "artist" is not an indication of what you do, nearly so much as it is an evaluation of how well you do it. That's used in almost any field, in any sense, except when it comes to applying pigment to a surface. Then, anyone with the price of a pen or a tube of paint is an ARTIST.

If one cannot be both illustrator and ARTIST, I would choose the former a hundred times over. To succeed at it requires hard work, a certain amount of skill, and proof of your accomplishment in the form of your livelihood. To be an "artist" requires one or two tools of the trade, and a state of mind... and they seem very easily come by.

A check from a publisher keeps me much warmer in winter than a verbal pat on the head by some faneditor.

Often, when approaching a task, I'm daunted - not by the task itself, but by the knowledge of how much more expertly someone else might have handled it.

It's a narrow line between dwelling in the past and predicting the nostalgic wave of the near future.

I don't pretend that my childhood was always happy. But seeing as how I am decidedly the product of that childhood, and that everything I am, everything I can do, and everything I'm capable of becoming is the result of that childhood, I can't really regret too much of it. Change a bit of the past, and you irrevocably alter a great deal of the future.

I can't help appearing a little wierd. I tried for years to be like everyone else, and failed. But now, in fan groups, I tend to feel remarkably square. I'm out of ~~step~~ step even with the out-of-stoppers.

Hell, George, I think the vast percentage of fans are hopelessly conventional. Maybe it has to do with the covers on old prozines being different than in interiors, or protective coloration, or Twonk's Disease. I remember Harlan's speech (in San Diego?) where he gave the fans hell and got a standing ovation at the end. (Maybe they all thought he was talking about some other fan. I know I did...) Maybe you just need you social barometer adjusted. Just be yourself George. I won't say "Don't change" because that would be a curse. But be the best possible you. (Even the not-so-best-you is pretty good, George. As you know, I think you talk/write better about art than almost anyone.)

Be superior if you can - but be physically superior as well or it's not a heck of a lot of fun.

I cannot stand the individual who insists upon telling me how good he is. I figure that if he's really good, his work will speak for itself.

Genius is hard to bear in others.

I'd hate to be Don Simpson. I wouldn't want the responsibility of all that talent.

(on the HOGOs) If one wins a prize only because all of those who are better were eliminated, the prize is worthless. How could ~~the~~ ~~the winners~~ the winners ever know if they could have beaten them?.

If we make distinctions because of wealth or family position, then we pretty much deserve the kind of friends we get.

I don't know who to pity most, those in the cliques, or those who are trying so hard to get in.

Geez, I didn't realize I was so jam-packed with wisdom, smartness, and culture. I hope there's something in there that you can use. A lot of it, out of context, is pretty damned pretentious.

Sam

UNCLE BILL
WANTS YOUR
QUOTES!

DEFEND
LITERACY!

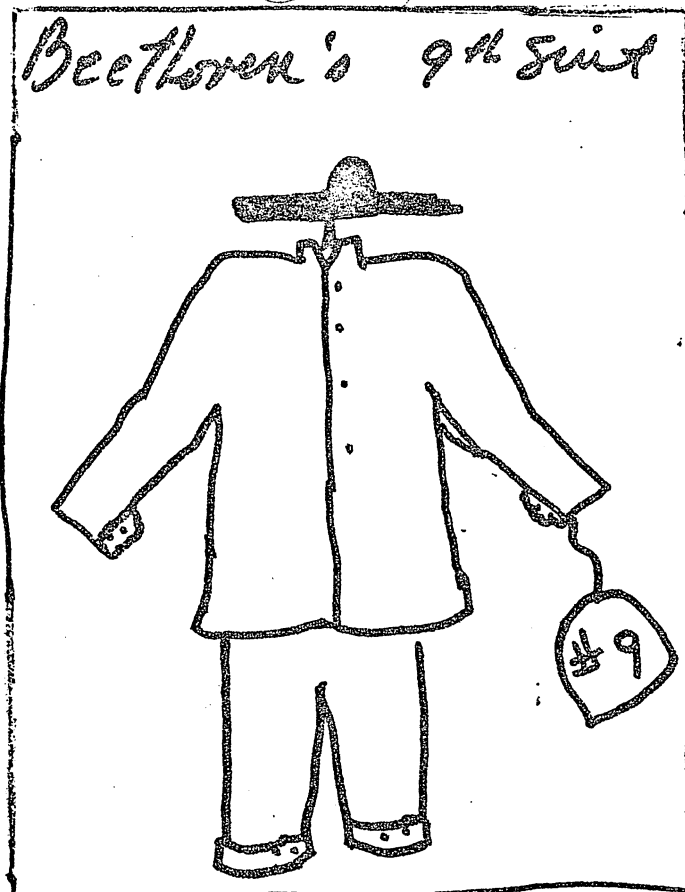
BECOME
IMMORTAL!

EGOBOD
FOR
ALL!

AND ALL
FOREGOBOD!



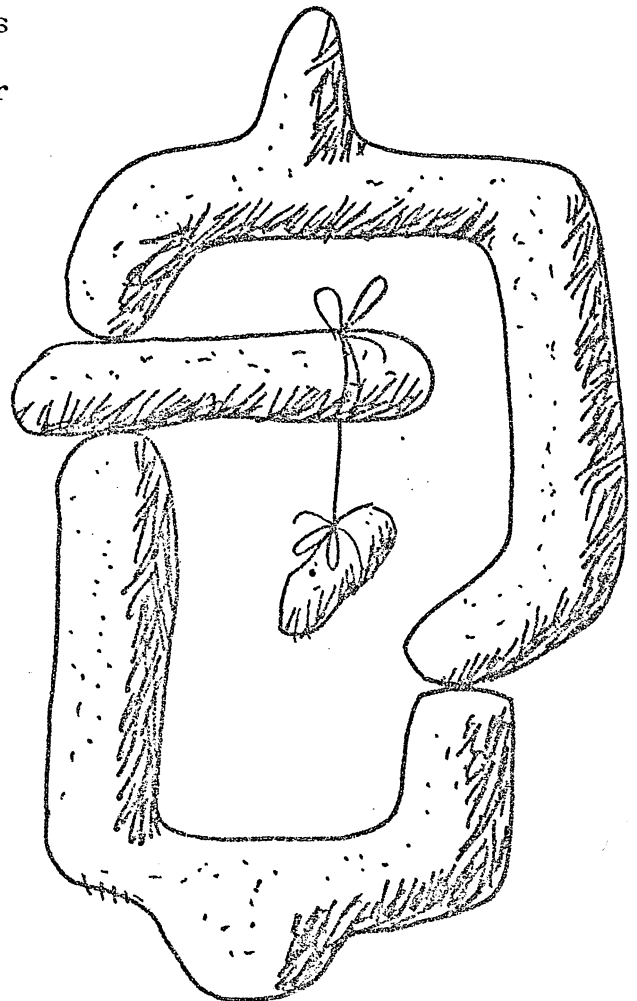
Beethoven's 9th Suit



Received & read Gregg Calkins FAPA magazine--will be interested in hearing how you are doing now on your diet. (Just occurred to me for the umpteenth time that this li'l ol' letter substitute goes out to quite a variety of people, many of whom will probably have not the faintest idea of what a FAPA is (or care). Well, that's the trouble with uncatholic tastes in friends. Tom Newman, Stephanie Bernstein, and others will just have to sweat it out.)

Below is a letter from a Craig Howarth with quotes from an Isaac Asimov speech made at Cleveland State University. (But Cleveland isn't a State...)

15 June 77 Had dinner with Mark Evanier the other night--discussed comics, TV, our high school days. Len Wein is coming into town in a few weeks, before the San Diego ComicCon, so we'll have a chance to play. (I'm really vamping until I write down past this drawing on the right and can tape in Craig's letter you see.) Sharman is into rehearsals for a number of one-act plays. In fact we'll have to leave the Comic Con early, 1/2-way thru, to get her back for it. (And I'm off to Australia...)



RELATIONSHIPS

ROTSLER

On Harlan Ellison:

"Harlan Ellison is this tall."

"I can't resist making short jokes and he can't resist making fat jokes, but I don't know what that has to do with me."

"He's got a very, very low vocabulary."

"Does he write better than I do? Of course not."

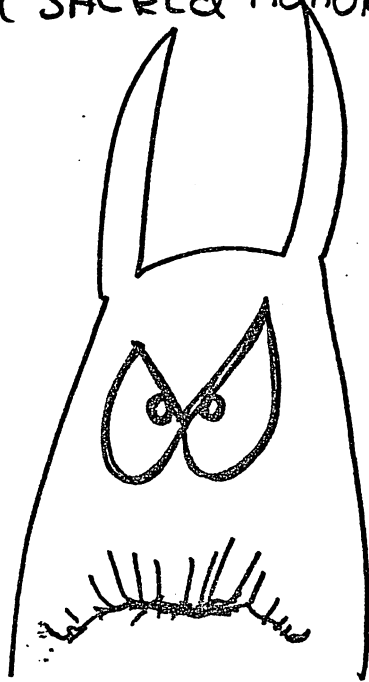
On his writing:

"I have not written over 160 books. I have written over 180 books, but who's counting?"

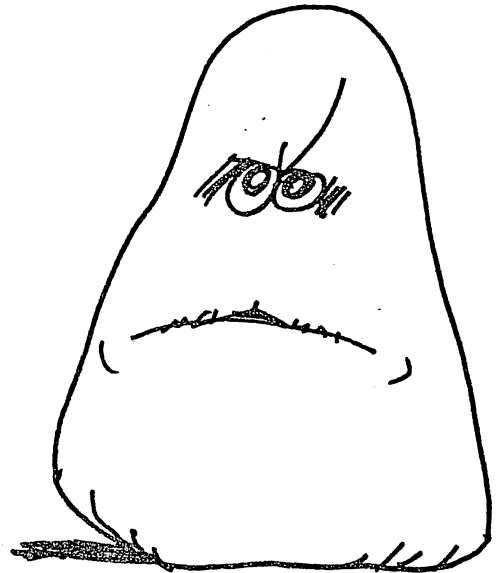
"Most people who write books waste an awful lot of time on frills. I cut them out. Most important of all, I cut out the thinking; I just sit down and let my fingers work."

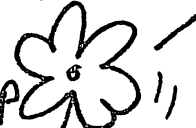


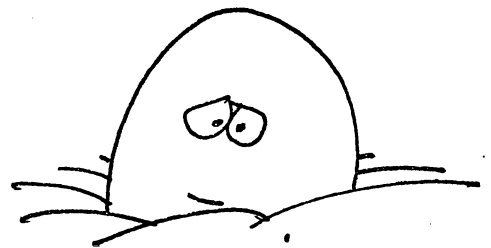
Sucking Lemons is
a SACRED honor!



The hardest part of
my career has been
The constant necessity
For new material.

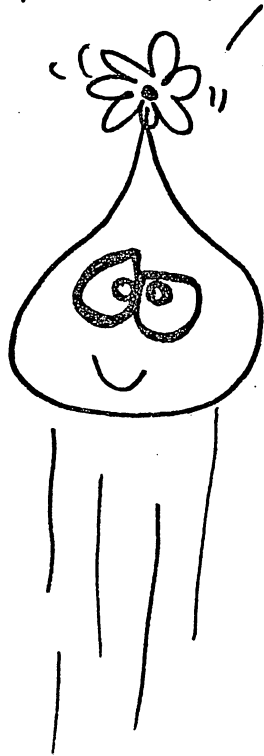


This is the voice of
America, broadcasting
From
high atop 
ER... ah...
um...



My therapist told me
that A return to the
womb would be a
mistake. But I can't
help it - it's so
comfortable.

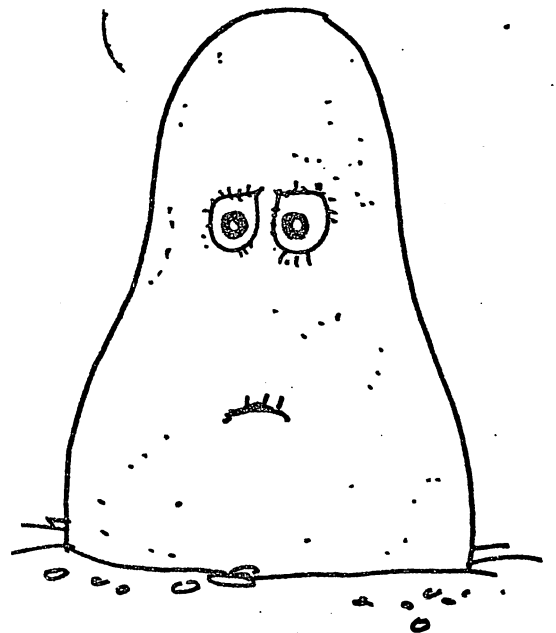
I hate to be smug,
but I owe it All
to SOLAR Photosynthe-
sis power!



What's wrong with
Matriarchy?



Do you think
False eyelashes
would make a
difference?



This drives the
Women CRAZY!

"There is something to be said for the art of procrastination, but I'll
get around to it later."

(Len Wein)

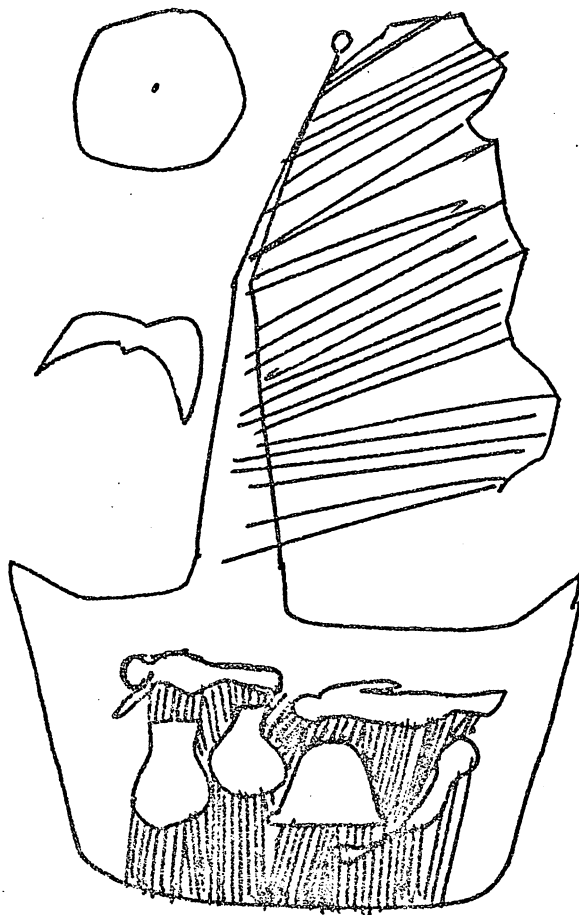
18 June 77 I leave for Australia
July 27th and arrive
the 29th; I return August 15th and
arrive the same "day." Unless I can
scrounge some extra money (for travel
and models) and stop over to visit
Neola Graef in Maui and photograph
some nekkid ladies to pay expenses.

I would like to recommend
two books to you. Both, oddly
enough, are by women writers. I say
oddly enough, because I read them
together. One, SLOW DAYS, FAST
COMPANY (The World, the Flesh and
L.A.) by Eve Babitz is extraordinary,
superb writing; all about recent
life in Los Angeles. (Not SF). The
other is FLOARING WORLDS, by Cecelia
Holland, and it is SF. Very long--
535pp--but most interesting. The
ending bugs me, but the trip was
excellent. Written like a modern
novel, with a great female protagon-
ist.

Are any of you model fans?
Not the living, breathing kind
mentioned above, but models of things.
All my life I have been a complete
sucker for models--whether they were
scaled down replicas of soldiers,
buildings, rockets, planes, cities
or whatever--or blown-up models of atoms, bugs, anything. The kind
of movie prop that is an 8' pencil or a 15' chair turns me on. That's
probably why, in TO THE LAND OF ELECTRIC ANGEL, I had a Kong bigger than
"reel life," a huge samurai, a Christ, Devil, etc.

When I was a kid I was "into" electric trains, though I never
build any kits (they didn't have kits when I was wee). I never got into
airplanes, though I admired the models. There are, of course, a number
of model RR magazines, and model airplane mags and flying models (which
is different still). I recently discovered there is a monthly mag,
published out here, called MILITARY MODELER. It stresses WWII tanks &
planes (which is not my interest) but they have all sorts of photos &
articles on figures, which now come in a number of sizes, in kit form,
up to 100mm. The magazine has lots of Napoleonic stuff, which seems to
be very big with these people--I suppose because of all the fancy
detail. But a recent issue had articles on Persian soldiers, one before
that on medevil knights.

In my short time observing this I see they have gone from simply
creating a figure (whether kit or scratch built or reconstructed from
different kits to make a "new" figure) to creating a "scene." Recent
examples shown have been a Confederate soldier lowering the flag in
surrender, a Napoleonic scene in the snows of Moscow, WWII battle
scene, etc. (They seem to like the Germans better than the Allies.)



SAMP

ROSLER

If any of you are interested, it's MILITARY MODELER, Challenge Publications (they also publish a lot of girly books), 7950 Deering Ave, Canoga Park, CA 91304. It's expensive--\$2.50 per, \$22.50 a year--but I trade the local newsstand, using all those damn gothic novels and other crud I get for review.

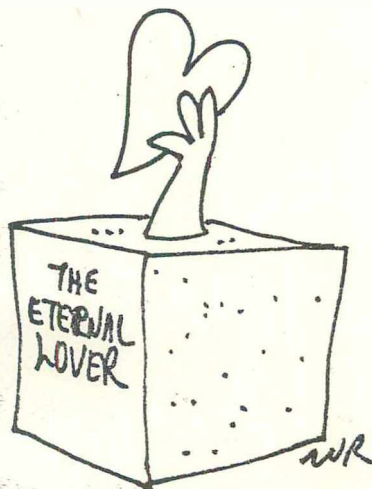
They even have cons.

"Getting hurt on the playground is a lifetime occupation." (Carol Carr)

NOTES Sherry Gottlieb deserves the Award of Merit for all the different quotes she has sent in. Thank you, mum. # I get something almost every day regarding QUOTEBOOK, I'm happy to say. God only knows how big it is now. Damn. Why did I write that? It made me go through the 13 binders of Xerox finished copies (the originals, with all their tapes strips, fill 24, each $\frac{1}{2}$ full). I counted 1,921 mss. pages. A quick word count on random pages give me about 150 words per page... for a total of 288,150 words. Gad. There is easily another 15,000 in part pages, ready to be filled & Xeroxed. Hot damn. (That's not too many.)

"Good music is that which penetrates the ear with facility and quits the memory with difficulty." (Sir Thomas Beecham)

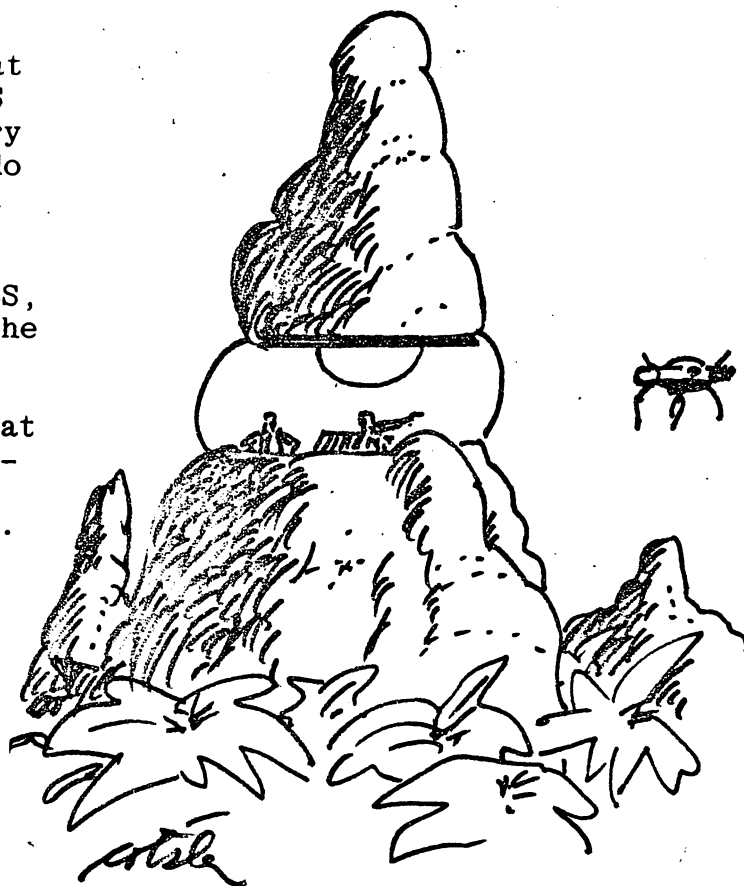
27 June 77 Had dinner with Mark Evanier recently and he gave me some notes for my "The Fine Art of Tape Machine Messages" article; then last night Gabe Kaplan was guest-hosting the TONIGHT show and Mark was backstage feeding him gags, and "Kotter" did a bit of monologue on the tape machine answers of famous people. # Philippe Hupp, of France and of the Metz SF Festival, showed up unexpectedly, just in from San Francisco. Took us to dinner, then turned around and the next morning flew to Seattle to go salmon fishing with Frank Herbert. He'll be back later. Gadabout. # Just called Harlan to get Dorothy Fontana's number and found him GRUMPY. Cheer up, Harlan-honey, life ain't nohow permanent. # QUOTEBOOK submissions are still coming in, only now often from people I didn't ask in the first place. I guess the second ripple is widening. People have been telling friends or sending them my little request. I received about 5-6,000 words from one man, all good stuff.



5 July 77 A number of people remembered my 3 July birthday and I thank you all. The Ellingtons sent me a belt knife--that is, a belt buckle that comes out to be a knife. With the admonition to not open the box until July 3rd I restrained myself until that faithful day. (Did you know that I was born 63 years after the Battle of Gettysburg? Or did you care?) # As a birthday present we decided to again see STAR WARS. So did hundreds of others, so we went up the street--one of our neighborhood theaters is the famous Chinese Theater with the footprints of stars in the forecourt--and saw SORCEROR. Why they named it that, I dunno, except the director was the director of THE EXORCIST (Pt.1) & I guess they wanted to cash in. "Sorceror" is painted on the side of a truck in very faded letters, tho,

but that isn't even the truck that makes it. It's a remake of WAGES OF FEAR and possibly better. Very good film, we thought. # Didn't do much on the 4th--my first non-fan 4th since I don't know when--but Sharman had rehearsals & I wrote. Saw "Our Happiest Birthday" on CBS, about last year's 4th, with all the "tall ships" and fireworks--just gorgeous. When that was going on the first time I spent most of that day in a con hotel room with Sharman, Sid Coleman, and one of the interchangeable Benfords, I think. (heheheh) They showed something on this show they didn't show the first time: the ships coming back down river with the wind in full sail. Just lovely. If they repeat it, watch.

Burbee says: "Evidently, to have a KTEIC you've got to be a female or Bill Rotsler. Any other options?" (None.)



"There are no important differences between men and women, but the unimportant ones are sometimes very interesting." (Ashleigh Brilliant)

Alan, Dean & Foster writes:

My personal highlight of our trip to Australia for the Aussiecon was a visit to the house of artist/writer/sculptor/cartoonist Norman Lindsay. This incredible creative genius, only poorly known in this country, has had little of his work published here. None of his oils (to my knowledge) have been published anywhere, including Australia. His home is a National Trust, filled with his sculpture, paintings, etc.

I'm well aware of Lindsay and love him. I have had a paperback book of his ink drawings for something like 30 years, and one of the things I look forward to is seeing the art in his home. I also read the 2 (?) books he wrote--and illustrated--but I missed the movie made from one of them, starring James Mason. It may not have been released here, or on a quickie one-week art house run. I just love his hundreds-of-angels/devils/witches-rising-into-the-sky drawings. Neola has always reminded me of a Norman Lindsay woman. When Miss Graef was living with Paul (and they were living with me) I saw a lot of her naked, just like one of his drawings & told her several times how she resembled his work. # A watercolor of his appeared in a frontispiece to a book published (here, I think) in the 40's. The book I have is from the 30's, I believe)

"Reading Russian literature is like reading very small footnotes that are a page ahead of the written matter." (Gerald C. FitzGerald)



C.A.P.S. That's the Comic Art Professional Society. We went to its third meeting the other night, attended by Frank Ridgeway, Jack Kirby, Mark Evanier, Don Rico, Willie Ito, & others. It's rather fun. We met at an animation artist's union hall; very comfortable.

And Sharman joined.

You see, while I was off in Australia for three weeks (for more of my adventures Down Under see the DUFF REPORT) I left her with Len Wein. She told him an idea, he liked it, she wrote & he bought a 5pp story for the Thor book; and she sold him another! Meanwhile, Mark Evanier saw the stories, like them, and she's writing a western for San Rio, the Japanese publisher, and beginning a pirate story.

So she was eligible. While I was gone Mark took her around, even flew her on a one day trip to San Francisco to attend the Baycon, a comicscon, where she was introduced as a "Marvel writer" and bewitched Jack Kirby (flew up with Jack & Roz, his wife). They think she's Mark's girl and looked at me with a little confusion.

Also, Mark & I are doing a 30pp photo-comic book for Sanrio, and asked Don Rico to be a aging horror movie star. The other day, just parenthetically, Neola Graef called up, just hours before she was to fly to Alaska. She is staying in a Beverly Hills mansion, which is being baby-sat by a friend of ours, Dutch. We will use the home, which is almost without furniture, as the home of the star. The house has over 20 rooms but no one has counted; plus grounds, garage w/apt, a basement with wine cellar & underground parking. Nice location.

After the caps meeting we (Mark, Sharperson, Don Rico & his wife Michele, Jim McQuade--who did "Misty"--and myself) went to Canter's, then were joined by Sergio Aragones, who had been too busy to come to the meeting. (He's be on the new Laugh-In by the time you read this.) He drew on a drawing of mine. (Which will be reproduced somewhere, later.)

"The intelligent man who is proud of his intelligence is like the condemned man who is proud of his large cell." (Simone Weil)

← lost page

depressed about this, as you might imagine. She is close to 23, quite attractive, I think, in a gamin-like way, and sweet. Not nearly as fucked up as she was in her teens when she was nothing but trouble, going with bums, getting into trouble, etc. Even the insurance settlement (upcoming) is for a paltry amount, like \$15,000. Not much for a lifetime of screwed up spine.

Then there's this item:

BOB TUCKER WAS RIGHT

Some time ago our very own Wilson "Bob" Tucker wrote about "tuckerizing," the use of real names in writing. He said something like, "They may be friends now but the book will be in print for fifty years and they may not be your friend then."

Well, I confess to screwing up.

I knew better. Bob Silverberg told me the use of names was very amateurish, and I knew he was right, but I just couldn't help myself... it was too much fun. Actually, I almost always mix up the names-- Carol Silverberg, Terry Calkins, Gregg Carr, etc, to mention some I've never used.

I learned my lesson the hard way.

Some of you might remember me mentioning Chris the Hooker from time to time. She even appeared, partially naked, on the cover of a KTEIC recently. On page 244 of TO THE LAND OF ELECTRIC ANGEL her name appears in a black magic chant.

Imagine my surprise when I get a letter from the Random House lawyer, enclosing a letter from a Joseph Gellman, saying Christine Tsitirian is suing me! I really thought this lady was a friend, and used her name as a compliment (in context) and forgot or missed the purge of names when Judy-Lynn got on my case about my use of names.

Okay, so I misjudged someone. Maybe, as Sharman says, "Once a whore, always a whore." (She is very protective of me.)

In a phone conversation with the Random House lawyer he said that this Gellman acted very odd indeed, for a lawyer. The RH lawyer was being very discreet, but suggested I have my attorney talk to him, or that I, before I got my man on the case, talk to Chris. Well, I chose to see William "Jake" Jacobson (who is a Good Guy & is also handling Lisa's case).

Jake calls this Gellman and after the conversation shakes his head and says, "That's the strangest conversation I've ever had with an attorney in my whole career!" The guy wouldn't tell Jake upon what basis the law suit was being framed (or whatever the legal term was), saying, "It's not my job to advise other lawyers," etc. When Jake asked him if he was aware that Miss T. had been a figure model (didn't mention prostitution) Gellman accused him of having a dirty mind and that his mind was in the gutter, etc etc etc. Very abusive. Jake said, "Oh, I thought we were going to have an intelligent, polite conversation." More abuse. Jake asked him, "You are an attorney, aren't you?" (He had already looked him up in the lawyer's directory but didn't find out much.) Gellman became outraged, wouldn't even take Jake's address, ended up hanging up, saying, "Fuck you!" so loud I could hear it across the desk.

When I talked to Gellman the week before I thought he was strange, too, and figured I was being given a snow job. The Random House attorney was amazed he was suing only for \$3,000-5,000, saying they usually ask for \$300,000. RH offered a \$100 to settle it as a nuisance.

I figured, knowing Chrissy, that this guy was enamored of her, as bother the RH & my attorney said they'd not take this case on contingency, and even try to talk the client out of it. So I figure

(1) either she was desperate; (2) the attorney talked her into it; (3) or he is doing it on his own. This last is unlikely, but the guy is so weird that it is possible. I really have a hard time believing that Chrissy would do that, but there it is.

Sigh.

So now we wait. Jake thinks the guy is so strange that any judge would throw it & him out of the court, that we are certain to win, but meanwhile it takes \$\$\$ to defend. Very odd.

But I learned a lesson, and I guess--since there are so many writers out there in my "audience" --I thought I'd pass on this advice. But then, you are probably not as crazy as I am.

I use names all the time: John Grennell is the hero of "Epic," for example. Dean Grennell often signs my name to letters about technical stuff in guns magazines, to give an answer to a question that (I guess) no one had asked & Grennell wanted to answer. But I'd never think of getting annoyed about it. I used Harlan Ellison in my very first story, but that was because I thought maybe he & I would co-author it and he'd take it out. When I decided it was finished I sent it off after scratching out Harlan and putting George in. But Galaxy could see what I'd done and for some reason thought it unique that one writer (read: neowriter) used another as a character. They phoned Harlan who said it was all right, that I'd not screw him up, etc. (This was despite the fact that Harlan was X-ed out!) Of course, I used Carol Oakland, Silver Mountain, Boyd Busby, Terry Ballard (who turned out to be real only I didn't know it!), Gilman Gottlieb, Eklundy, Michael Tackett, Uschi Luv, Caleb Turner, etc. But those are "legitimate" Tuckerizations, mis-matched switches.

Well, I'm going to be more careful. Listen to Father Tucker, children.

"The ability to make love frivolously is the chief characteristic which distinguishes human beings from beasts."
----- (George S. Kaufman) -----

Shortly after writing the above I find that my daughter is in the hospital, that in addition to the fractured kneecap, she has a severe infection in her left ovary (she thought it was from the injury), that her white blood count is about 3 times normal, that if they had found her a day later she might not have lived. She's in for a week, stuck with needles, drinking foul potassium, etc. But will live. They still don't know about the knee, though.

Sharman & I went crazy on Sunday. We went to a "Doug McClure Film Festival" (our name) and saw 1975's AT THE EARTH'S CORE and 1976's THE PEOPLE THAT TIME FORGOT. Both are fun, but there is a scene in the latter picture, in a throne room, that is purest Frazetta, lighting, color, poses, sets, everything. Remarkable reconstruction! Neither pic is Good, but both are enjoyable time wasters.

On the way back into Hollywood we decided to try to see STAR WARS. again, saw a relatively short line, found we only have 70 minutes to wait, and so saw it again. Almost as much fun as the first time, or as much fun if you disregard any surprise element gone. Got to talking to a black guy & his family behind us in line--it was his 4th trip, their 2nd! He said he went to see it first because EVERYONE, everywhere, was saying, "You gotta see it!" He did & said he was caught from the first moment to the last.

I know--Ben Bova & other Big Name Folks think it makes people think that's SF, but so what? It's fun. So they are 30-40 years behind the times and used almost every cliché in the book--they did it well.

NOVA PRODUCTIONS, INCORPORATED

5907 WEST PICO BOULEVARD • LOS ANGELES 35 • WEbster 8-2101

MARTA RANDALL REPORTS ON THE WESTERCON

Stuff of interest: Vancouver was lovely. I'd not been there before, and although I'd been told that it was a pretty city, I guess I didn't believe it until I was there. Lots of green stuff, trees, fountains, shrubs, grass. Water coming out of the sky. Tall buildings. Friendly people. Funny-looking money. I intend to go back.

The convention itself was pleasant. Rather smallish, or so it felt to me. Not too many big-time pros there: Niven, Pournelle, Poul Anderson, Bob (me), Kate and Damon. Palo Alto won the bid for the '79 convention, and yours truly was asked to be toastperson for same. I've two years in which to panic. Actually, what Jerry Jackes has decided to call me is "toaster". This presents problems. People ask me whether I come with two slits or four ("one", I tell them), and whether or not I butter. So I thought that I could be the Waring Blender for the banquet, but that led to questions about AC or DC. This subject deserves more thought.

And, finally, here are some things for your Quote Book. Trust that they'll be of use:

Marta's First Law of the Universe: Crap accumulates in geometric proportion to crap cleared away.

Marta's Second Law of the Universe: The more things an item is designed to do, the less likely it is to do any one of them very well.

KNOW WHAT I LIKE ABOUT MY FRIENDS? They're aware. Not necessarily "hip" but certainly aware. They vary vastly in personalities, careers, ages, sexes & perversions, attitudes toward life but they are all intelligent and aware. Some are more aware than others, of course, but the nice thing is that they are aware of the interpersonal currents, the strains & stresses of friendship, the subtlties of social intercourse (I'm beginning to sound like a social scientist's master thesis--!) and are all likeable people.

I don't even know why I am saying all this, except I've had this urge to have a BIG party and invite all these people. But, of course, thws is impractical. They live all over California, parts of the Midwest and East, even furrin countries. I suppose that's why conventions are fun, and the main reason I go.

I certainly don't go because of the programmes, the panels, the hucksters, the masquerades, etc, though I attend or enjoy some of them. I go because of the people. I'm going to Australia because of that, and not to see the country. (It's all Susan Wood's fault!) I enjoy fans, or at least a hundred or so of them. Some of my best friends are fans. In fact, almost all of my friends are fans! (Hi, Tom Newman! Hi, Uschi & Ron! Hi, Louise & Neola!) I enjoy being with them and conversing, bantering, listening, learning, bouncing off ideas, and so on. Sharman & I actually live a fairly quiet life here, especially lately, because she has been rehearsing these one-act plays almost every day or night, plus taking belly dancing lessons one night a week, plus

13 July 77 Grant Canfield writes: "Missed you at the Westercon. The train ride was an absolute gas, notwithstanding that they left our luxury cat off the train, and we hit a truck in Oregon. Spent most of the time on the observation/lounge car, as did most of the charter, getting soused and enjoying convivial conversation and companionship with lots of marvelous people. The con was fun, too, although devoid of dope. Dan Staffan was there, & is Right This Minute visiting me in SF. We tried to get a jam going (with Tim Kirk & others) but it was unsuccessful, lacking the Rotsler spark." Ah, me--such responsibility, keeping fandom's flickering spark of creativity alive...

"Most people are good listeners but poor understanders. Some don't even listen--they just pretend."

(Heidi Saha)

THE 1977 SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON What a time! It was really fun, except for one thing: Sharman had to return at mid-point, just as the thing was starting to swing. (She is in a play, which is the worst play in the world. She was trapped into doing it by a woman in whose workshop she works, a woman of reputation. It's an original, called "The Left-Handed Ball Point Pen" and is terrible!)

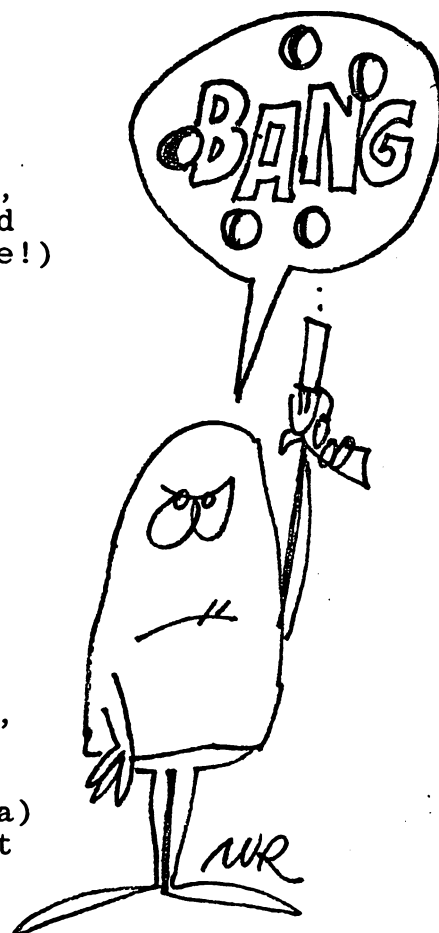
Len Wein came to town just before the Con and spent five days with us. Mark Evanier took us all to 20th Century Fox for lunch; we visited the M*A*S*H set & saw them preparing to shoot; saw stars, etc. We visited Harlan one evening & I got to see his new addition. He--pool shark supreme--took Sharperson and Len for \$4. Very nice office, though, as usual his house is PACKED with stuff-on-the-walls.

Anyway, while this is only the third time we've met Len we felt we have known each other for years. We took separate cars to San Diego so SD could go back. Once there I talked to George Clayton Johnson, Lola Clayton Johnson, (saw their son Psul), Captain Sticky, Don Rico and his pretty wife Michele, who is a dancer. (Don is an old-time cartoonist; drew Cpn America)

Talked & renewed acquaintance with Scott Shaw, Rich Butner (VP of the Con), Russ Manning & his wife Dodie, Robert & Ginny Heinlein, all sorts of people.

At one point they were having a big cartoonist "jam" and I drew on a wall-size piece of paper with such as Harvey Kurtzman, Larry Todd, Scott Shaw, Le. Mars (Who does "Pudge") and many others...including B. Kliban, the very same B. Kliban who does CAT and NEVER EAT ANYTHING BIGGER THAN YOUR HEAD. Talked to him, even. (Pronounces it "Klee-ban", by the way, & will not reveal the "B.") Everyone wanted to know what he is like: he's tall, dark, has a thick moustache, is about 40, not bad looking, very diffident & wry.

For the Heinlein's blood drive I did about 75 cartoons and about another 150. Found some color felt tips, left over from a patio session where they have Big Names (Jack Kirby, Manning, Joe Kubert, Joe "Superman"



Schuster, et al, do cartoons, which they then auction off for the benefit of the con. (The insane original Kliban went for \$85--a 2'x3' drawing of a caveman holding a huge green cat and wearing a red cape) while a blah Superman drawing by Shuster--the same one the poor blind SOB--got \$225...I hated being broke then.)

The Heinleins were much in evidence and poor Ginny seemed rather bored--kept coming over to talk.

The masquerade was really very nice--very funny, with even musical production numbers! While it was setting up I was sitting with Michele Rico (behind her husband, who was a judge, and behind (barf) Eric Hoffman. I started doing drawings which she and Len Wein captioned and we got some really good drawings out of it...I'm going to do a TATTOOED DRAGON TEAM-UP.

Y'know, if you are not "into" comics this whole thing must be dumb.

I just realized I got detoured up there...the color pens prompted me to do the first color cartoons I've done in ages! # The drawing to the right is by Mark Evanier. He said, "Anyone can draw like you. I can draw like you!" I handed him paper. You decide. I also have the most original drawing of the whole con. It is reproduced on the next page...I was sitting at the Banquet and a young kid handed this drawing to me. I shrugged, though I must admit it is a bit strange to have people give me cartoons. Then I passed Russ Manning's table and he said, "Oh, I forgot to sign it." "Sign what?" I asked. "The cartoon." I gaped. Turn the page and look at a drawing done by the Alex Raymond-style artist of the TARZAN strip!

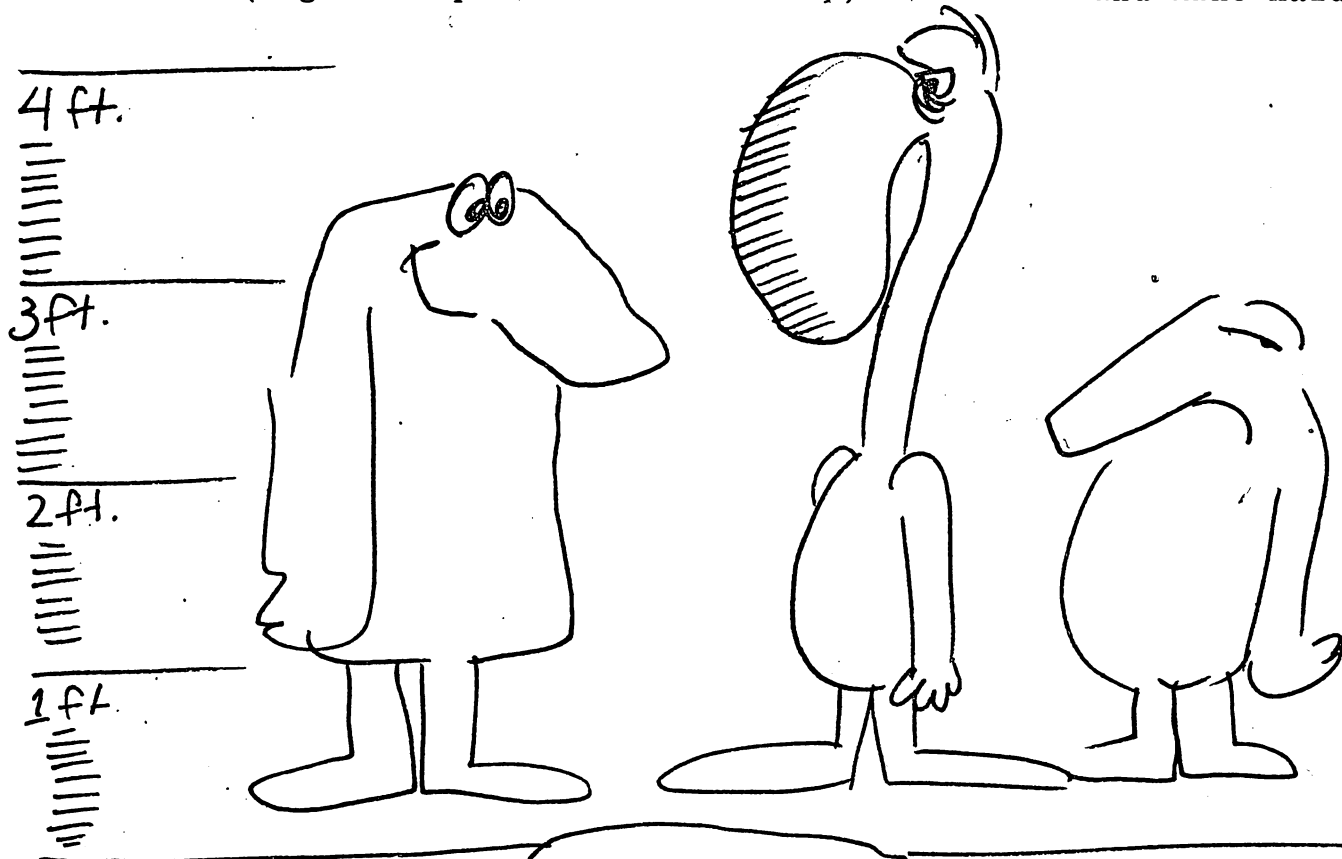
Bought a copy of an English TARZAN Weekley with 1/3 of a story by me, drawn by Manning. Must get the others. Better than in Bulgarian, like those Evanier got from ERB.

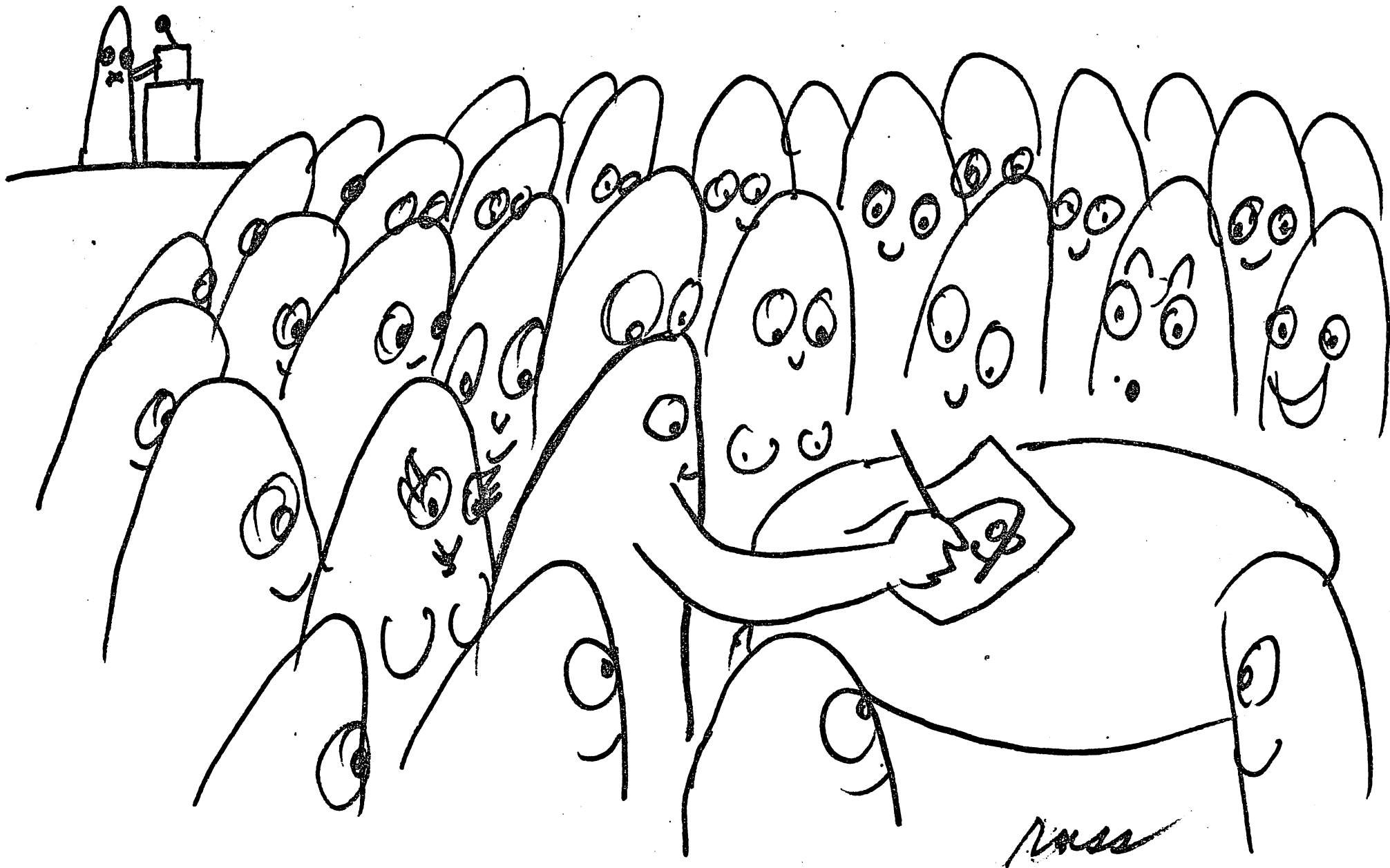
Was suddenly confronted by Dave Stevens, a very good, young, handsome-in-the-Errol-Flynn-tradition artist...told me a Chicago Sun Tribune rep wanted a "Star Wars" type strip and asked me to do it with him. We had talks & when I get back from Australia we will do it. Hope we are not too late.

The Huckster Room was filled with goodies. As I was broke I only bought 3 of the hardbound European s-f comic books. # For some reason I got on Jim Steranko's case. (He's publisher of MEDIASCENE and artist of CHANDLER & has been a comic book artist a long time.) I don't know why, and it was all friendly, but I did DOZENS of cartoons for people to take to Jim. Things like, "Present this to Jim Steranko and he will stroke a portion of his body for you" or "Jim Steranko is my hero...or possibly hefoine" or other such. He "retailiated" by putting up a huge sign on the wall behind his hucksters table saying BILL ROTSLER



READS MEDIASCENE! When he wasn't there I changed it to BREADS and added a guy chomping. I even did a cartoon of a nasty guy getting on me, asking why I was picking on Jim. "Because he can't fight back," was the reply. # Below: another MARK EVANIER PRODUCTION. You can see why he's a writer. # We had dinners & lunches at various places, stayed up late, laughed a lot. After the Banquet there was a Closed Door Pro party that was very nice. When I went to bed at 3:45 Len & Michele were still dancing, Sergio Aragones (from MAD & soon from the New Laugh-In) were singing & dancing to the tip-tapping music of C. C. Beck (original Captain Marvel artist), Dan O'Neil and Mike Kaluta.





Possibly the best line in the whole con was by Len Wein. Sharman & I were having dinner with him at 10 Downing Street (a very nice restaurant within walking distance of the El Cortez). We embarrassed ourselves by laughing so hard...Len said, "I didn't know my brain was loaded. I was cleaning my face and it went off."

I saw Alan, Dean & Foster for a few seconds, just long enough to ask him if it was true he had done the novelization of STAR WARS. He said, "Contractual obligations prevent me from answering that" or some such answer. Met the nice people from TALES OF TEXAS, which is a sort of Comic LOCUS. Missed totally Bill Blackbeard & Jock Mahoney;

Well, not totally; the second I typed that semi-colon Jock called. Weird. Just wanted to say hello, that he missed me, etc. This is the first time I've ever caught him on his funny-voice number; and only because I had just written his name. His advice: The Aussies like to fight and make love, but the women don't shave their legs.

Anyway, it was a total fun trip. They even gave us a HUGE room. However, a plane planes via your window about 8am. Very effective alarm clock.

There were panels (Roy Thomas, Don Glut, Len, Kurtzman, Kubert, Stan Lynde (of Rick O'Shay), etc. Had a chance for a long talk with William Stout (does marvelous dinosaurs!), Stan Lynde, and Russ Manning. Lynde is giving up Rick O'Shay because he averages \$7,000 a year & his best year was \$30,000, out of which he has to pay an inker & letterer. Incredible. Very depressing effect on many of us--especially as Dave & I are thinking of trying the crap shoot of a strip.

The Heinleins borrowed the Rotsler/Wein drawings & put them up all around their room for a Dead Dog party. We didn't go; we returned to LA and went to a pleasant party at the Larry Nivens instead; it was a "wind-down" for us.

The next day, Monday, we took Len to the Universal Studios tour and suffered the embarrassment of being seen by someone we know (Bjo Trimble) standing in line for a tourist attraction. It was an okay trip, though. Tired but game, we recharged our batteries with a party at Sergio Aragones hillside house, which is right on a cliff, with a fantastic view of Los Angeles from the Hollywood hills. Lovely house, very nice party, mostly of Comix Folks (Roy Thomas, Joe Kubert & his family, Dave Thorne from Hawaii, Don & Michele Rico, Trina Robbins (who does "Rosie the Riveter" and when a young teenage hippie I did some nudes of by request of Forry Ackerman), Lee Mars, many others.

Today I just ran around cleaning up things while Len went off with Mark Evanier to Santa Barbara to visit Dan Spiegle and Russell Myers (who does Broom-Hilda). Tonight I go to Australia. See ya later, gang.

"Sidney Coleman is listed among those qualified to blow up the world."
(Sharman DiVono)





Above: Sergio Aragones as (left) he thinks he looks and (right) the way others see him.

"My boy, every man has two heads. When one of them is stuffed with hard, dry business problems, he always thinks more clearly after stuffing the other into a soft, wet vagina."

Attributed to J.P.Morgan, when asked why he always had gorgeous women about.

22 August 77 Interesting things happened today. I acquired a new column to write. This one for VELVET and we're calling it KICKIN' ASS and I get to work off all kinds of venom. Anything or anyone or any trend or attitude you'd like to see me kick? I also met the legendary David Zentner (VELVET's publisher & a Titan in the field) whose idea the column was. Showed him my samples of photo-comics and he went crazy for them, wants me to do some (from stock) right away.

Over the weekend Mark Evanier and I wrote or 30pp comic for Japan and Sharman will play the lead. She has also written two outlines for San Rio and is working up an Iron-Man and Len Wein called to say the artwork on her first two is coming in and she is to do her dialogue right away. John Buscema (considered by most to be The First among comic book artists) drew them. I'm also writing my DUFF Report in odd moments and am too busy to get back to my 3 unfinished novels. Drat. Sharman is really busy at writing & loves it, by the way. And is pretty good, too! If she starts this good, what will practice do?

"If God had wanted women to give blow jobs She wouldn't have given them teeth."
(Emily Prager, in Titters, 1976)



To left: An addition Sergio Aragonés made to a drawing by me.

27 Aug 77 Selling the photo comic strip to VELVET turned out to be a lot of trouble. Rather, the re-writing & re-organizing. But it was done, at a good price, but their idea of dialogue is pretty raunchy so I left it up to them. # Sharman is getting brown as a ~~Berry~~ berry with almost daily sun worship. # I have now acquired two columns to do for VELVET, plus a regular feature.

The other day Sharman was cruising through the San Fernando Valley trying to find a "John Wayne" cowboy shirt--a commission from Len Wein--and she was hailed by our friend Dutch, the guy who is babysitting a mansion. He said Georgina Spelvin was appearing at a theater in Hollywood and wanted to see

me, so she agreed, and that night she met Georgina for the first time. First we had a bit of food in a Howard Johnson's at the corner of Vine & Hollywood, along with a fellow topless/bottomless dancer named Amby. George was tired, but determined to "give her all" at each performance.

When we returned to the theater there was a porn film on (all the films starred Georgina or had her as a "cameo") but they stopped it in mid-scene to start the show.

The first dancer that came out had a good body and beautiful breasts but only about two moves, $2\frac{1}{2}$ at most, which she just repeated over and over. The next girl was better, but not a hellava lot, and then Amby came out. Terrific rear end, which she used quite well, and something of a contortionist. Finally, Georgina. She comes out, does a bit of a talk & some jokes, but it was heavily cut due to the fact they were having "amateur strip night" or something.

Guys carried on quite a dialogue with her, mostly obscene. I think it was Sharman's first or 2nd porn movie & maybe first topless, bottomless show. Finally Georgina (whose real name is Chele Graham; she did a twist on George Spelvin, which is a name used in "theatah" when an actor is doubling in a role) did an interpretive dance. She's 42, but in excellent shape, as dancers tend to be.

As soon as she finished the amateur strippers appeared and right away blew the previous "house nudes" off the map. They tended to be very tall & lanky; not my time. When Georgina came out she took us, a newspaper reporter who is enraptured of her and a number of other people to a nearby Chinese restaurant and bought us all dinner. She wanted us to come see the next show, a longer show, but neither Sharman nor I were really interested.

Georgina is a really "honest" woman, gracious about all the nut cases that come up with "presents" and to have a word with her. Everyone has a following of some sort, and especially porn queens, I guess.

Last night Sharperson & I went to our first meeting of the Mystery Writers of America. No, we're not members, but my agent, Richard Curtis, was to speak. We had never met and it was a bit difficult to make connections. I thought he looked a bit like Richard Lupoff. He

has a beard, which surprised me a bit, I don't know why. By him, the mystery field is quite depressed, but SF is going good. We have a meeting in a few days to really talk. # Got the proofs on ZANDRA to check and on the re-reading I really got back into that world. Am impatient to do the sequels, but we are a long way off. # Curtis spoke of a tax shelter deal some business men are trying: they buy the copyright to your book (published this year) and give you X dollars in cash (depending) plus a note for, say, \$100,000 or \$150,000. It is an investment. They split all movie sales, royalties, etc with you. But what they hope for is, ideally, "a book by a Pulitzer Prize winner that is a stinker." The idea is that the book doesn't make money so' they can write it off. At the end of 7 or 8 years, when your copyright returns to you, they settle with the IRS. You get \$5,000-\$50,000, they have the use of the \$100,000-\$150,000 for 7-8 years, etc. All very complex and your agent can better explain this, and it may only work for 1977, as the IRS may rule it out. But this was the way a lot of movies were made until the IRS stopped it. Looks like something to see about if you have a book published this year. But I suppose Curtis has already told the San Francisco area people.

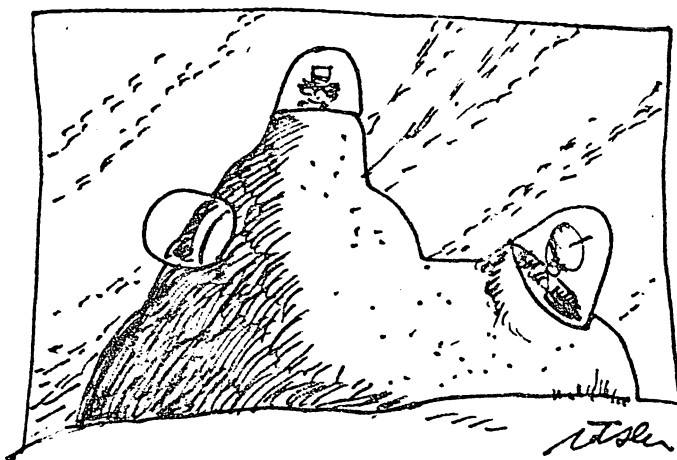


"The smalltime vaudville mother has the endurance of a doorknob."
(Fred Allen)

2 Sept 77 Yesterday I took the "star" of our little photo comic strip that Mark Evanier & I are doing for Japan (and possibly later, here, if they get a magazine going in the USA) and I shot her around Hollywood. She is 15, but looks to be the most dynamite 19-year-old you've ever seen, with a great body. Big Time Movie Mogul Bob Evans at Paramount is interested in her. Today, coming back from the market I noticed they were shooting a movie over a couple of blocks. So, since our photo story was about Hollywood, young actresses, and has in it a movie-within-a-movie I walked over to see if I could shoot something we might be able to use. Shot some behind-the-camera stuff of a car doing a gorgeous 4-wheel drift into a scruffy alley in pursuit of a guy in a black suit, who dumped ash cans in his path. Noisy. But maybe I got something; cameras, camera & equipment cars, crowds, etc, and can maybe use. Oh, it was a "Starsky & Hutch" & there they were, star-lovers, looking into space, saying their lines to themselves, learning them despite the noise and the 100 people watching.

Last night I went to LASFS, at their new club house, which is not remodeled yet, but it will be nice when done. Much, much larger, too. New Russian-descent writer from NYC, Nick Yermankov, was there and we went out later. (He had been a 1% biker in his checkered career and knew of "Doc" Pfeil.)

Couple of days ago I had a long talk with Richard Curtis...and heard him praise Marta Randall's new manuscript greatly! And then she called and I got to congratulate her in person, as it were. Dick & I talked about the book Greg Benford & I had just agreed to do together, SIVA DESCENDING--a nifty-neato disaster novel full of hard science stuff (we all know who does that part) and high movie sale potential. Or so I think.



Sharman also discussed a movie idea with Curtis, one that started out as a western comic for Sanrio, but which I said was too good for them. Dick said he'd handle it.

Sharman has been working very hard: first on doing two stories for Marvel's "Tales of Asgard", then a longer pirate story for Sanrio--all sold--and now an Iron Man short for Marvel. Isn't that Marvelous? I'm going to have to get her her own typewriter.

The other night Mark Evanier, Sharman, myself, Bil Stout (yes, one "l")

who draws the best dinosaurs) and a number of others all met at a theater in Santa Monica for the "Russ Meyer A Thon." I had never seen "Up" and Sharman had never seen any Russ Meyer epic.

Well, "Up" is--just as Mark said--every Russ M. film rolled into one. Everything you've ever seen in an RM film is there--the nasty deputy sheriff, the endless (but beautiful) shots of people fucking on rocks, treestumps, in water, etc, the up-thru-the-bedsprings-with-no-covers shot (followed instantly by a down shot, showing all the bedclothes, the super-sexy girls (too hot for the men to handle), great amounts of blood, superb photography, superb closeups (and hundreds of them), the far-out-of-town setting, the everything-exaggerated attitude, the corn galore, and--of course--the super-busty women.

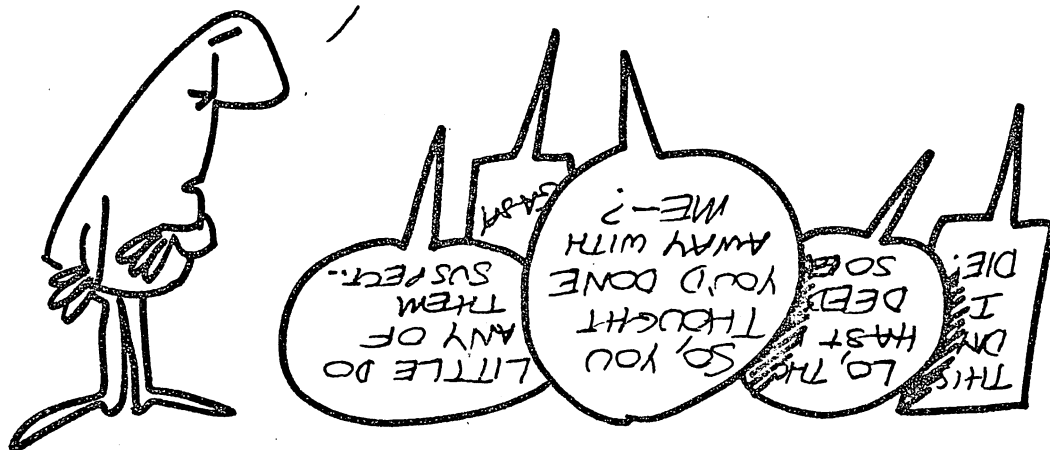
I still think Uschi Digard was the girl in the leather mask.

Oh, other RM trademarks: some weird, aging German--Hitler, Martin Bormann; rape; brutal, cavemanesque men; the same lines ("I'd like to strap you on some day!" and others) and the "greek chorus." (In the case of "UP" it was a gorgeous girl, nude.) He has not progressed in years.

And starting tonight--yet another comic convention!

 "Suicide is the final expression of accurate self-criticism."
 (Craig Strete)

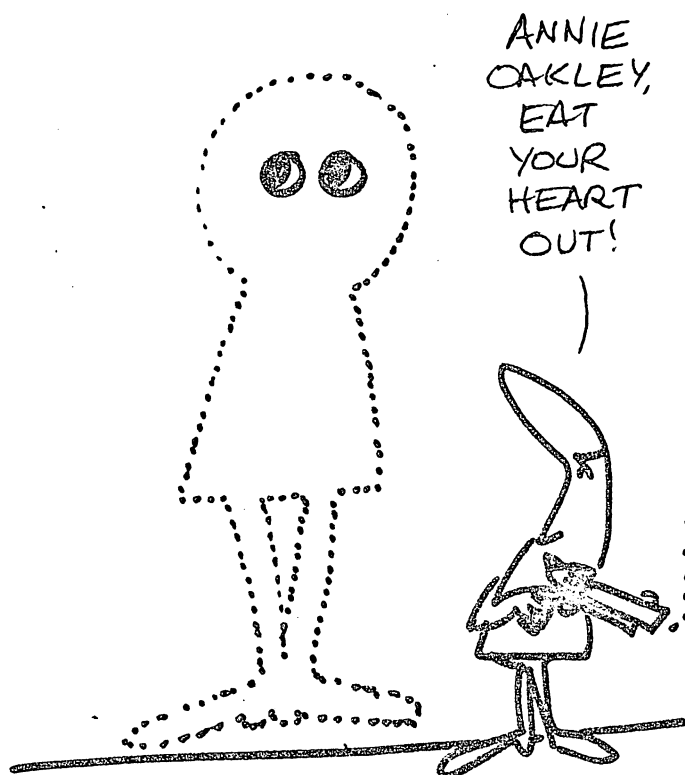
I WISH THESE MARVEL
 WRITERS WOULD LEARN
 TO PICK UP AFTER
 THEMSELVES.



6 Sept 77 The con. was a disaster. We didn't go the first day, and there were very few people the second. We had dinner with Mark Evanier (who captioned the drawing to the left) and Don & Michele Rico (she captioned some, too), & others. But the comicon had no one; all were in Florida or elsewhere.

"He is suffering from an acute fear that he will wake up one morning and discover that he is not Harlan Ellison." (Mark Evanier)

The next day was better. We had gotten to know Steve Gerber, who writes Howard the Duck, and I was on a panel with him & Mark. Talked to Geo C Johnson, Lola, Jack Kirby, etc. To show how small the con was Sharman & I were two of eight judges in the masquerade...and there were ten entries. Got to know Dan O'Neill, who is drawing "Odd Bodkins" again, and found him funny, crazy & probably hostile (his reactions are on the violent side, I think). For dinner we (Mark, Gerber, Dan O'Neill, Shary Finnigan "Drought Chic", Charlie Lippincott--Star Wars PR--and some



others went to Sergio Arogones's nice home. (It looks, in the evening, just like a set: Spanish style, with a huge blue-purple cyclorama with a few blinkies on it, big cyc of LA in BG, and you can't see other houses because of walls.) Got to know Lippincott much better, talking to him at great length, found out all sorts of Star Wars trivia. Long talk with Dan & Sergio, too. Sharman & Sergio get along fine; both have an interest in Spanish lit & talk Spanish. Later on people swam, drank, ate pizza, played guitars & s-ng songs & talked a lot. Until 2am. Very nice time.

The next night we saw "Laugh-In" with Mark Evanier--and winced a lot. It's terrible. The only good stuff is Sergio & Sergio himself. What a disappointment!

Sharman has finished & sold the Sanrio pirate story, I've seen the first day's shooting on the photo-story we are doing for

them. Found out my camera is malfunctioning. Great. Marvelous. Now Sharman is into writing more things and as soon as Sanrio pays her she will buy a typer like this IBM of mine. (Which is so nice!)

I really had fun this week, drawing & letting other people caption them. Whole new thing. Will try to do a "King-Size TATTOOED DRAGON Team-Up" later on. Lots of writing to do: DUFF report, Kteic, stuff for VELVET, "Siva Descending" with Greg Benford, comics. Oh, and the ranch will go into escrow this week, out in 3-4 weeks & I will have a (gag) trust fund.

"Don't buy a car that gives its guarantee in hours." (Pat McCormick)

8 Sept 77 Had another CAPS (Comic Art Professional Society) meeting last night. They conduct business on a "as brief as possible" basis, which gives everyone more time to talk. Afterwards, Bill (one l) Stout gave a slide show on his trip to the Galapagos Is. Showed a man trying to ride a huge turtle, but mounted in such a way as to seem he

'We Are Not a Muse'

● Most people have a cockeyed impression of artists, and it's mostly the fault of the movies. Consider the matter of the Muse, if you will. In films, inspiration is invariably supplied by somebody who looks like Jacqueline Bisset or Raquel Welch. In real life, however, the person most responsible for creative output is the landlady. Which makes sense. I mean, how much work would ever get done at your place if Jackie Bisset were lurking about?

Another falsehood that the movies have perpetuated is that artists, like priests, are those who have been called. That is rarely the case. Occasionally, say every 500 years, a Mozart will happen along. But most artists fail into their careers in the same mundane fashion as shoe clerks and pharmacists. In some cases, art happens to be the family business. Take the Bachs and the Strausses and the Dumas, for instance. Or consider our own Wyeths. If you're a Wyeth, you go into painting as inevitably as a Kennedy goes into politics or a Rockefeller goes into money.

Of all the arts, writing is held in the lowest esteem. Part of the reason for this rests with the movies. It is not interesting to watch somebody write, and so Hollywood has shied away from putting most writers on film. But part of it is due to the fact that everybody writes something, and, so, there is no mystery to it. Though their own literary output consists of nothing more taxing than letters and shopping lists, it is hard for most people to hold novelists and playwrights in the same sort of awe they reserve for painters and composers.

Actually, if a person had a choice in the matter, he'd be wise to take up sculpting as a career. The reason is that the world never gets to see a sculptor's mistakes. I mean, if a guy sets out with a 2-ton hunk of marble, intending to carve an elephant, and he goofos on the trunk, he can always turn it into a 1-ton horse. And if that doesn't go just right, he can convert it into a 500-pound pony. And if that doesn't pan out and he finally has to settle on a 3-pound poodle, nobody's the wiser.

On the other hand, a field to be avoided at all costs is photography, because nobody reaches the age of 5 in this country without being convinced that he takes pictures as well as the next guy. I happen to admire photography more than painting. People paint fruit, but they photograph each other -- and I'd rather look at people than at apricots. I'd rather talk to apricots, but that's my problem.

"Thor: That's a fun book to write if you have a lisp."

(Len Wein)

was humping the beast, causing Sergio Aragonés to ask, "How long was he on that island?"

Bil also showed us Ah-Hah lava--so sharp & needly that you wear out a pair of tennies in about $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour or so. And the Blue-Footed Booby, etc. Then some great photos of Machu Picchu, showing details & angles I had never seen. For example, you know the "usual" shot with the great peak behind it? They climbed that, on a vary narrow, very steep Inca trail and shot down. Also, Bil was taking a photo of Allison (his girl friend or wife) on top, with a 1,000 foot drop before you start bouncing...asked a companion to make her laugh...he tickled her. That is her phobia. Her screams echoed throughout the Inca world.

Mark Evanier is going to write a pilot for Hanna-Barbera, live action show called "The Beach Girls" (not his title or idea). I did another photo-comic for VELVET. Sharman got a 50% bonus from Sanrio for her pirate story. If I don't end this Kteic soon it will become a life's work.

End of a letter from Terry Carr: "This letter seems to be full of thank-yous. You must be a Wonderful Person."

Oh, and here's part of that very letter:

A request and a correction, however. I'd rather you dropped the quotation from me under WRITING, since in truth I think this was a banal observation, one that's been made by countless writers ever since Homer remarked that Odysseus kept wanting to speak in barbaric arrhythmic sentences. I think others have said it much better than I did, too.

(Probably all good writers, and some bad ones, take delight in seeing their characters and plots change as they get into a story. Ursula Le Guin was here a couple weeks ago, and over dinner we confided to each other that we both hated to write from outlines. "If I know what's going to happen, where's the fun in writing it?" as she said. My sentiments exactly.)

Fireworks Are Climax To Party Celebrating Sculptor's Birthday

A vivid display of fireworks was a colorful climax to the party celebrating William Rotsler's birthday at the Santa Rosa Rancho home of the artist and his young wife last Sunday evening.

Young Rotsler is a sculptor whose work in metal is becoming nationally known. He is currently putting the finishing touches on a massive fountain he was commissioned to make for the Beverly Hilton hotel which will have a gala opening early in August.

One of the guests at his party was the well known Southern California artist, Gene Coe of Manhattan Beach, who exhibited his skill during the evening in a

series of drawings done on the spot. Guests also spent some time examining Rotsler's collection of unusual books after dinner.

Others who attended the affair were Mrs. Gene Coe, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Peteler, Mr. and Mrs. T. A. Yagodka and Adam Yagodka.

more than three years old at this point. One time, while I was staying at Terry & Carol Carr's, we discovered that Greg had, in Carol's phrase, "absentminded professorly" left his appointment book behind. Carol, Terry, Pat Ellington and I noticed there was a lot of white space left in it. The defilement was immediate. We made, in

handwriting that approximated his but was not forgery (we weren't good enough), a number of new entries, such as: "April 15: trade in car... May 2: Flight #212; leave note for Joan... May 18; Tell Jim about adoption... April 27: Nebula Banquet--win one.... April 28: Complain to Pournelle." On the last page, previously unsullied, we handwrote the multiplication table from 1-12 but omitted the final calculations for the hard ones and added in parenthesis, "Check with Sid." (In case you don't know, Greg is a nuclear physicist type & Sid is Sidney Coleman, who teaches the stuff at Harvard.)

We returned the book to Greg before he left town and, as Carol says, "sat down in the lotus position to wait for his response." A few days later came a long distance call to Terry and it was "appropriate," which means he didn't get mad.

Joan told Carol Terry later about his moment of discovery. She'd asked him to do an errand. He opened his appointment book, looked at the proper date, and said, "No, I can't. I have to... I have to... WHAT?"

Greg said, "I couldn't believe there was a lie in my appointment book."

"A mansion is any house with two stairways."

(WR)

I think I better end this issue of KTEIC. Earlier, I seem to have lost a page where I am talking about my daughter Lisa, and I had to write "page lost" on all 35 copies. # We have sold our ranch (for \$50,000 less than the asking price, but the people are paying all the money now, instead of over ten years, as is usual with Big Land Deals. But mine, sigh, goes into a trust fund. Drat. 'Bye for now. (Looks like KTEIC has become a quarterly...)

William Rotsler

"The only way to be followed is to run faster than everybody else."
(Francis Picabia)

NEWS FROM THE PAST: Actually, it's rather a put-on by the editor, who was there. What we did was set a hillside on fire. The unusual books were "men's magazines."

TOM SWIFT AND HIS SURPRISE VASCETOMY, E. P. Dutton, 78

Now that Greg Benford & I are writing together I thot I'd retell an old story,